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Letter dated 25 August 2008 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to my report of 28 February 2008 (S/2008/135) to the Security Council. In that report I indicated my intention to dispatch, in coordination with the Government of Lebanon, a team of border security experts to Lebanon to undertake a thorough follow-up assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team.

The follow-up assessment is in accordance with the request of the Security Council contained in its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/29).

I fully support the conclusions and recommendations in the report of the follow-up assessment, which I have received from the Team leader, Lasse Christensen (Denmark).

I have the honour to attach the report of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II and should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

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Report of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II

Summary

The Security Council, in its resolution 1701 (2006), called upon the Government of Lebanon to secure its borders and all entry points to prevent the entry into Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel.

At the invitation of the Security Council, and in close liaison with the Government of Lebanon, the Secretary-General dispatched to Lebanon a team of border security experts, the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team, to fully assess the monitoring of Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic and to report back to the Council on its findings and recommendations in this regard. The team visited Lebanon from 27 May to 15 June 2007 and submitted its report to the Secretary-General on 22 June 2007. The report was forwarded to the Security Council on 26 June 2007.

In accordance with the request of the Security Council in its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/29), the Secretary-General stated his intention to dispatch, in coordination with the Government of Lebanon, a team to Lebanon to perform a follow-up assessment of the border security situation, to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team and to provide any further recommendations to enhance Lebanon's border security.

From 15 to 31 July 2008 the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II was dispatched to Lebanon. During this period the Team held talks with principal actors in the Government of Lebanon, the directors of the four agencies involved in border security and their local commanders, stakeholders in the Northern Border Pilot Project and representatives of donor countries.

The Team visited all four operational border crossing points and a further one not yet open. The Team also visited a number of locations along the Green Border in the north and east of Lebanon, including locations of Lebanese-Syrian territorial dispute and cross-border areas under Palestinian control. It also visited Beirut airport and the seaports of Beirut and Tripoli.

The Team concluded that, even taking into consideration the difficult political situation in Lebanon during the past year, and notwithstanding the activities of the Northern Border Pilot Project and the Common Border Force, the rate of progress and implementation of the recommendations of Team I has been insufficient. There are, at most, disconnected islands of progress but there has been no decisive impact on overall border security.

To a certain degree, the Northern Border Pilot Project has incorporated a number of the recommendations of Team I. Although not always exploited to their full potential, the incorporation does constitute a move in the right direction.

At the border crossing points, in particular along the Green Border in the east, little progress was observed. This is despite the fact that a number of the recommendations could easily have been implemented without political, structural or financial implications.

There were, however, some positive steps. These included the almost completed relocation of the Aboudieh border crossing point to the actual border, the installation of additional border security equipment such as scanners and the computerization of passport control.

The overall situation renders Lebanon's borders as penetrable as they were one year ago during the first assessment.

The Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II, therefore, reiterates the recommendations put forward in the previous report as they remain as valid now as they were one year ago.

As a supplementary recommendation, it is suggested that the Government of Lebanon instigate without delay the formulation of a strategic plan which should include its desired end state and objectives as well as the ways and means of achieving them.

It is further recommended that the donor countries actively ensure that cooperation and the coordination of their activities is enhanced so as to achieve the optimum output from their efforts.

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I. Introduction

A. Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

1. In its resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council called upon the Government of Lebanon to secure its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry into Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel. In paragraph 15 of the resolution the Council outlined measures that States should take to prevent the supply of arms or other military assistance to any entity or individual other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

B. Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team I

2. In its presidential statement of 17 April 2007 (S/PRST/2007/12), the Security Council welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and invited him to dispatch at the earliest, in close liaison with the Government of Lebanon, an independent mission to fully assess the monitoring of the border, and to report back to the Council on the findings and recommendations of the mission in this regard. Accordingly, the Secretary-General dispatched to Lebanon a team of border security experts, known as the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team, to fully assess the monitoring of Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic. The team visited Lebanon from 27 May to 15 June 2007 and submitted its report and recommendations to the Secretary-General on 22 June 2007. The report was forwarded to the Security Council on 26 June 2007 (see S/2007/382).

C. Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II

3. In accordance with the request of the Security Council in its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/29) and with a view to assess thoroughly the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team I, and update the Council, the Secretary-General stated his intention to dispatch a team to Lebanon to carry out an assessment, in coordination with the Government of Lebanon. The Team consisted of Lasse Christensen, Team leader (Denmark) and Arno Langanke (Germany), both border security experts, Sherronne Blake Lobban (Jamaica), a Customs expert, and Colonel (retd) Colm Doyle (Ireland), an expert on military issues (the terms of reference are attached in annex III).

II. Methodology

4. The Team carried out its mandate in coordination with the Government of Lebanon and the four most relevant security agencies, namely, the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces, General Security and General Customs. This approach was facilitated by the Government's full and comprehensive support. All meetings and site visits requested, whether with members of the Government, security agencies or donors, were readily accommodated. The Office of the United

Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon was especially helpful in facilitating all of the Team's requests to visit specific locations and meet with officials. The Team met with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the directors of the four security agencies and regional military commanders. Field visits were made to all border crossing points and other areas along the Green Border. In addition, a helicopter flight allowed the Team to observe a large part of the Lebanese-Syrian border. Its assessment focused on the technical aspects of border security and management. The Team's present report should be read in conjunction with the report of Team I (see S/2007/382).

III. Background

A. Political situation

5. According to Lebanese officials, the deterioration of the political situation in Lebanon subsequent to the mission of Team I hindered the adoption of many decisions necessary for the further implementation of that Team's recommendations. This was especially so for those actions requiring changes in the legal framework or that would have major financial or political implications. Various Lebanese interlocutors the Team met with expressed their hope that the recent improvement in the political situation would permit further progress on border issues with political implications, such as the delineation and demarcation of the border and a single border security authority.

B. Common Border Force

6. As stated in the first report (and other assessments) one of the most significant issues that would contribute to enhanced border security would be increased coordination and cooperation between the Lebanese agencies that are responsible for border security. In order to achieve this, the Common Border Force was established, comprising all four agencies involved in border security under the framework of the German-led Northern Border Pilot Project. The official border crossing points do not come under the remit of the Common Border Force.

7. The project was proposed at a meeting of the Prime Minister of Lebanon and the German Ambassador in November 2006. Approval to proceed was received in January 2007. German advisers, together with their Lebanese partners, designed a pilot project to assess Lebanon's capability, with donor assistance, in securing its northern border. A major factor of the project was to integrate the four Lebanese security institutions concerned with border protection tasks, namely the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security forces, General Security and General Customs, into a coordinated operational unit, the Common Border Force. The project has received contributions from donor countries and the European Union. The Common Border Force became operational in December 2007.

8. The Lebanese Border Security Committee was established and comprises senior representatives from the different security agencies, under the chairmanship of the head of the Internal Security Forces. A project implementation unit headed by a Colonel from the Lebanese Armed Forces with representatives of the other three agencies was also established.

9. The Common Border Force is composed of approximately 800 personnel, proportional to the strength of the different security agencies. It is commanded by a General from the Lebanese Armed Forces, whose deputy is a Colonel from the Internal Security Forces. Joint operations are conducted from a common operations centre; joint planning, improved mobility, equipment uplifts and increased communications interoperability are all designed to improve integrated border management practice. Following initial preparation and execution stages the project has now commenced its consolidation phase.

10. The total length of the northern border is about 100 km, representing the area of operations of the Common Border Force. The two official border crossing points within this zone at Arida and Aboudieh are not part of the Force's remit, however, nor is an additional border crossing point at Bokayaa, currently under construction. The first 65 km of the border is marked by the Nahr el Kabir river.

IV. Findings

A. Common Border Force

11. Although the Northern Border Pilot Project is now deemed to be in a consolidation phase, the Team believes that it has not yet reached the stage of full implementation for a number of reasons.

12. Some equipment essential for the operation of the Common Border Force has yet to arrive. There have also been cases of incompatibility of equipment and power sources. Consequently, the Common Border Force has had to commence its operations without all the necessary equipment in place. Training for the Force personnel was provided by Denmark, which has established a training centre, and a Lebanese-chaired training secretariat. The Common Border Force appears to be making promising progress with on the job training, which is a positive step to gaining experience.

13. The Common Border Force has been equipped with a range of 4x4 vehicles, all-terrain vehicles or quad bikes, which are suitable for operations in the more inaccessible parts of the border and for mobile patrols. These patrols must be well planned and executed in a non-routine and variable way in order to gain the advantage of surprise. There was no evidence to indicate that they are used in this way. These types of operations must be based on sound analysis of available intelligence. While such an intelligence and analysis component has been established within the Common Border Force, there did not appear to be any output or coordination among the agencies, nor was the Team informed of any instance where an operation was launched by the Common Border Force on the basis of specific intelligence. It would appear that intelligence information is not shared or coordinated among the agencies, even though they are supposed to operate as a single unit within the Common Border Force. The current level of operational integration between the four agencies is less than optimal and there is room for improvement. It should be noted, however, that such integration requires time to build a sense of trust among the agencies.

14. Concern has been expressed regarding the manner in which the Northern Border Pilot Project has been planned and executed. It has been claimed that the

lack of an overall strategic concept at the outset and the absence of a detailed implementation plan have had an adverse effect on achieving the desired goals of the Common Border Force. It remains important, however, that the project should continue to be supported by donors and that the Force be allocated the necessary resources to demonstrate that it is sustainable.

B. Official border crossing points

15. This report refers specifically to the official border crossing points located along the Lebanon-Syrian border, namely, Arida, Aboudieh, Kaa and Masnaa, and Bokayaa which is still under construction.

16. In order to achieve full and absolute control over these official border crossing points, certain basic measures are required, such as proper fencing of the control areas. In addition, relocating premises close to the border should be a high priority, as is currently being undertaken at Aboudieh.

17. The situation at the Arida crossing point has changed little from previous reports. While it is the only operating crossing point that is located directly at the border, the building in which General Security and General Customs operate is still at the same location. A new site has already been identified and cleared but construction has yet to commence. When completed, this site should be utilized in such a way as to facilitate a one-stop control system.

18. The border crossing point at Aboudieh reflects the most visible changes initiated since the visit of Team I. The border checkpoint has been moved directly to the border. The newly constructed site provides separate lanes for arriving and departing traffic and sufficient space for vehicles or trucks to be inspected. General Security and General Customs share the same premises, which fosters an integrated border management approach and the execution of a one-stop control. The newly constructed site is not completely operational yet, for lack of a power supply. The new border crossing point should be fully operational by mid-September 2008 depending on progress.

19. Although the Bokayaa border crossing point was scheduled to be operational by July 2007, it is still under construction. Lebanese officials present at the site provided a promising plan. The deficiencies listed in the report of Team I had been duly considered. Prefabricated offices are to be installed directly at the border, enabling General Security and General Customs to work closely together and close to the actual border. It remains to be seen whether this border crossing point, once completed, will meet integrated border management requirements. It was noticed that the Syrian authorities have completed a new border crossing point structure on their side of the border.

20. The Team saw no changes at the Kaa border crossing point from one year earlier. A major problem is the long distance between the actual border line and the checkpoint (approximately 12 km). According to the Lebanese officials the Team met at the location, there are no plans to move the site closer to the border at this time.

21. At the Masnaa border crossing point, the main entry point for trucks, a few changes could be observed. Again, the major problem is the long distance between the actual border line and the checkpoint (approximately 8 km). Existing plans to

move the location closer to the border line have not been initiated to date. However, as an interim arrangement, neighbouring lands have been purchased and the site has been satisfactorily redesigned. As far as vehicle flow is concerned, the arriving traffic is separated into two lanes, one for passenger vehicles and buses and the other for trucks carrying cargo. Trucks no longer need to cross lanes to a site for inspection as was the case previously.

22. A significant change for the better at Masnaa has been the installation of a scanner unit which has been operational for almost a year. An average of 30 trucks per day are scanned out of a total of approximately 200 arriving into Lebanon at this border crossing point. No clear indication as to how these trucks are being selected was provided. It appears that no standardized risk assessment is applied, and random selection seems to be based upon the manifest and the intuition of the General Customs officers. According to the Lebanese authorities, no weapons or related material have been detected so far at Masnaa or any of the other border crossing points, although contraband items have been intercepted. The Team was informed that all trucks are subject to a tailgate inspection. For this to be achieved there is a minimum requirement for 35 General Customs officers to be present at any given time. The Team could observe that the current procedure results in long queues of trucks awaiting clearance. Some trucks are required to be emptied, depending on screening.

23. The entire location at Masnaa remains disorganized and highly unsystematic. It is possible to enter Lebanon without being properly checked by devising a route that circumvents this checkpoint.

24. According to the General Security and General Customs personnel interviewed by the Team, there is only limited local coordination with Syrian counterparts. This matter was referred to as a competency of the respective headquarters of the agencies.

25. Perimeters of the border crossing points are only partially fenced and no additional fencing at any crossing points was noticed. Only the newly constructed site at Aboudieh seems to be sufficiently fenced.

26. With the exception of Aboudieh, no progress has been made at any of the border crossing points towards the recommended "one-stop control" system.

27. Immigration checks at all border crossing points are carried out in buildings that have separate entrances for arriving and departing passengers. No such separation between these groups could be observed inside the buildings, however. The system for passenger control, checking of cargo and selection of vehicles and trucks for more thorough examination was on the whole inadequate. Only limited coordination between General Security and General Customs could be observed. The extent to which intelligence is used could not be determined. Standard operating procedures for the border crossing points, including regulations regarding the movement and checking of persons, vehicles and goods inside the control, have not been established. The Team was informed that some female General Security officers are deployed at the border crossing points.

28. The passport identification system at all locations visited has been computerized. The system is geared to read only Lebanese passports and identity cards, however.

C. Green Border

29. Prior to the Team's visit to the Green Border, several of the principal Lebanese actors, including the Lebanese Border Security Committee, indicated that progress on the eastern Green Border, outside the area of responsibility of the Common Border Force, was minimal, if not completely absent. During its field visits, the Team found this to be very much the case.

30. Along the northern Green Border, within the area of responsibility of the Common Border Force, it was found that most of the recommendations of Team I concerning its management have been initiated to a greater or lesser degree.

31. Training programmes for border-specific competencies have begun within the Northern Border Pilot Project. Non-military border security skills have been introduced, visible through the deployment of personnel and location of observation posts with a focus on border control and less on territorial defence. Mobile patrols were also performed in small, mobile units.

32. Nevertheless, evidence was found that 4x4 vehicles are still crossing the Green Border in the north. It was also observed by the Team that the checking of light traffic, such as pedestrians or two-wheeled vehicles, is not habitually undertaken. This was illustrated in one location when the driver of a moped chose to cross a dry riverbed next to an observation post of the Common Border Force in the presence of the Team and to his surprise was asked to produce identity documents.

33. It is the Team's assessment that the potential for reaching an acceptable level of border control along the northern Green Border exists, despite some shortcomings of the Northern Border Pilot Project. The extent to which it is being effective should be the subject of an assessment that is undertaken as part of a comprehensive review of the Common Border Force. Such an assessment should be performed preferably in conjunction with the assessment of the Northern Border Pilot Project that is expected before the termination of the present consolidation phase of the project.

34. The deployment of personnel and the location of observation posts were still almost exclusively based on military doctrines which call for static, fortified observation posts in strength. This seems also to be the case concerning the cross-border areas controlled by Palestinian groups, where it is crucial to maintain efficient control of any movement into Lebanese-controlled areas, as these areas are open to the Syrian Arab Republic.

35. It was claimed that mobile patrols were performed and always in strength (minimum 10 personnel). During the Team's two days of ground and one day of airborne observations, however, no mobile patrol activity was seen on the eastern border.

36. Along the east, no border-specific training has been introduced to the Lebanese Armed Forces. Despite some recognition of the need, no such training has been requested by military commanders. Very little border-specific equipment has been issued to the Lebanese Armed Forces along the eastern Green Border, where there is still a clear need for improvement in this regard. However, the Team noted that, when asked, Lebanese Army commanders mentioned the need for both military and border-management-specific equipment, although the latter should be the priority, given the role of the Lebanese Armed Forces along the Green Border.

37. There has been virtually no progress in the situation along the eastern Green Border and the Green Border remains as penetrable as it was during the mission of Team I. The primary reason for this lack of progress given by the Border Security Committee and commanders on the ground is the standing decision by the Government of Lebanon to first complete the consolidation phase and subsequent assessment of the Northern Border Pilot Project before taking other decisions.

38. There is still a pressing need to separate legal and illegal cross-border activities for both the northern and the eastern borders. Only a single location is known to the Team where a small, light traffic border crossing has been established that exercises full control over the legitimacy of persons crossing the border, allowing local Lebanese inhabitants with social needs to cross (relating to education, medical treatment, cross-border land ownership and the like), according to a list of names created by the Lebanese Armed Forces and the local community.

39. There are still countless signs of uncontrolled cross-border traffic, including vehicles. This is in particular the case in the east, where in many areas berms or physical roadblocks have been erected but are either quickly removed or simply bypassed by local illegal cross-border traffic.

D. Beirut seaport

40. The internal security features of the port of Beirut have been improved by the creation of fences that serve to separate and divide several areas of the port into zones. During the visit of Team I the construction of the fences was under way.

41. Control of access to the port requires further improvement, including the need for identity cards with security features for staff and the separation of the customer car park from the main premises of the port. Team I was informed that a project was under way to introduce identity cards with security features, but this has not yet been done. Although an area has been designated for car parking, this would best be situated outside the premises of the port.

42. The Team was informed that work is under way to construct a new passenger terminal for the clearance of crew members and ship passengers. In the interim, ship crews undergo clearance either at the side of ship or in a designated area.

43. Cooperation among the four agencies that are mandated to secure the port continues to be insufficient. General Customs and the Lebanese Armed Forces duplicate their efforts by performing separate container checks at different locations within the premises of the port. The Team was informed that General Customs officers now board ships that are docked at the port. Hand-held detectors and ancillary equipment have been received from the United States of America. In addition, General Customs continues to select merchandise for detailed examination, while the Lebanese Armed Forces are said to check all merchandise that enters the port. The Team doubts that the Lebanese Armed Forces can effectively examine all 200,000 containers and other bulk items that enter the port annually. In this regard, it is more effective to select containers for detailed examination on the basis of risk assessment and intelligence.

44. There were no reports of any seizure of weapons or ammunition by General Customs or the Lebanese Armed Forces at the port. However, General Customs has reported seizures of some smuggled merchandise such as counterfeit clothes,

watches and cosmetics. There was one seizure of drugs. The Team was informed that, in general, the priority of General Customs is to focus on the collection of revenue. It is very important that General Customs concentrate on checking for the illegal importation of arms, ammunition and bomb precursor equipment.

E. Tripoli seaport

45. The Team consulted with senior officials of the Lebanese Armed Forces and General Customs at Tripoli port. There have been no changes in security measures since a report completed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat in March 2007. The recommendations in that report were endorsed in the report of Team I.

46. Senior officers emphasized the need to acquire equipment, in particular scanners. They also pointed to the requirement for additional space to improve the port facility and accommodate more vessels. For the immediate future, however, the priority should be on preventing the importation of illegal arms and ammunition and ensuring that standard operating procedures regarding the examination of cargo include adequate risk analysis and are clear and unambiguous.

F. Beirut airport

47. Many of the recommendations of Team I concerning the airport have not been implemented. There is still insufficient physical separation of incoming and outgoing cargo. Docuboxes were said to be utilized, but during the Team's visit it was reported that they were temporarily out of order and were being updated. General Customs systems are computerized and currently utilizing ASYCUDA II software. However, this system is not yet installed at any of the legal border crossing points, which limits the overall operational benefits of the system. There is no evidence that the existing data storage system of either General Customs or General Security has been updated. General Security has reported some success in apprehending persons attempting to enter Lebanon illegally. According to the Lebanese authorities at Beirut airport, there have been no reports of any seizure of weapons at the airport.

48. At the airport, the four agencies are integrated under the leadership of the head of the Security Committee, but there seems to be a lack of synergy and coordination. Agencies at critical junctures seem to follow internal orders instead of taking an integrated approach. This is evidenced by the lack of coordination in implementing the recommendations of Team I that were specific to the airport. While there have been attempts to implement some of the key recommendations of Team I to improve security at the airport, some are only at the planning stage.

49. There is continuing improvement of equipment support for all agencies with a view to increasing efficiency. These include the French bilateral project, which comprises an equipped document laboratory for the detection of fraudulent travel documents. This laboratory is operational and officials at the airport have reported approximately 30 seizures of fraudulent documents during the laboratory's first three to four months of operation. The French bilateral project is expected to continue with new outputs such as training in canine handling and search techniques.

50. Overall, the staff of General Security and General Customs has been increased with the employment of additional officers, including women. The Team was shown two female staff stationed at different entry points within the airport who, it was said, were responsible for searching female passengers. It was also reported to the Team that all persons must enter through metal detectors irrespective of gender.

51. The Team was informed that the airport's security will soon be further enhanced by donations of hand-held detectors received by private donors and that the Government of Lebanon has procured three additional X-ray machines. It is expected that two of these will be placed at the conveyor belts in the Customs hall and the other will be used in the area beyond passport and Customs control.

G. Lebanese strategy on border security

52. It is evident that the transition from a situation with virtually open borders and inadequate experience in border security management to one where the Government upholds and enforces the control of its borders would be an enormous task for any country. To do so in the complex political and security environment that characterizes Lebanon currently is complicated in the extreme.

53. This illustrates the need for high-level strategic steering of the process on the basis of a strategic master plan that formulates a future vision for Lebanese border security and charts a programme of action towards that objective.

54. It may be the case that the political challenges Lebanon currently faces mean that certain aspects of the strategic plan are left pending. Those challenges, however, should not serve as a reason to delay the initiation of a process to produce such a plan.

55. It is the opinion of the Team that the lack of strategic steering encapsulated in a master plan is primarily responsible for the inactivity, in particular along the eastern border.

56. The lack of strategic planning has meant the absence of a clarification of the Government of Lebanon's desired end state for border security (even in imperfect shape), the ways and means of achieving this, a description of the phases and stations along the way and a process of self-assessment by the relevant Lebanese authorities in view of the strategically defined level of proficiency and effectiveness required. This situation has contributed to a number of factors that have had a negative impact on the Lebanese potential to uphold and enforce control of its borders.

57. The absence of strategic planning has had as a consequence, or contributed to:

(a) The lack of at least a tentative common approach by Lebanese authorities to the future structure of security agencies with border responsibilities;

(b) The absence of a process to identify assistance needed from the international community and a system to coordinate the provision of such assistance;

(c) The need for ad hoc decisions causing frustration among the personnel of the responsible agencies (for instance, instructions on reopening already closed illegal border crossings);

(d) The almost crippling lack of implementation of even basic measures, identified in the report of Team I, while awaiting the assessment of the Northern Border Pilot Project;

(e) The lack of a process of self-assessment and development, in particular on the eastern border.

H. International donors

58. A number of donor countries have contributed to the efforts to enhance Lebanon's border security. Some contributions are part of the donor countries' own bilateral projects with Lebanon. Other contributions have supported the Northern Border Pilot Project.

59. Consultations, in the form of both group and bilateral meetings, were carried out with the donor countries, international organizations and principal Lebanese actors. During the consultations, the Team observed that neither the Government of Lebanon nor donor countries had established an adequate mechanism to coordinate strategically the provision of international assistance.

60. Although forums for overall planning do exist, consultations and exchanges of information, often as ad hoc measures, are taking place between the donor countries. This would suggest that the overall forums are not functioning to any great satisfaction and that ad hoc measures are used as a substitute for strategic coordination and planning, as has been confirmed by representatives of certain donor countries. This situation gives rise to overlaps, gaps or inconsistencies in capacity-building and more. It is, therefore, seen as a vital precondition for efficient donor country support that such a mechanism is introduced.

61. Efforts being invested in the Northern Border Pilot Project are nevertheless encouraging. They may serve as the basis for further expansion of the current border security arrangements to the eastern border subsequent to an assessment process and the decision of the Government of Lebanon.

62. It is, however, important that donor countries continue to support the Northern Border Pilot Project, as the Common Border Force remains the main vehicle for progress, a potential platform for an expansion to Lebanon's eastern border and a possible model for a dedicated and independent border guard agency. Despite its suggested shortcomings and the differences of opinion on the Pilot Project, it is the Team's assessment that an amputated or even collapsed Common Border Force would represent a major setback for Lebanese border security.

I. Suggested next steps

63. There are a number of measures that can be taken, and processes that can be initiated, by the Lebanese authorities in the short and medium term to enhance the effectiveness of Lebanon's border security arrangements. These should continue to be seen in the framework of the recommendations of Team I and the continuing activities of the Common Border Force.

64. Given the need for greater Lebanese strategic direction and the lack of a strategic framework at the outset of the Northern Border Pilot Project, it is now

essential that Lebanon take ownership of this project. In this regard, the Government of Lebanon should develop a framework that indicates timelines and performance benchmarks for the continuing implementation of the project.

65. Consideration should be given to issuing a common article of uniform to each member of the Common Border Force, such as a beret, shoulder flash or other element, which may help to instil a sense of unity within the Force.

66. At the official border crossing points further specialized training is required. Additional cross-agency training should be provided to enhance the understanding and implementation of the philosophy of integrated border management.

67. A systematic risk assessment and analysis procedure should be urgently developed and applied at all border crossing points in order to accelerate the clearance of trucks and cargo, as well as passenger vehicles. Newly delivered equipment requires efficient use as quickly as possible.

68. The Government of Lebanon should provide the necessary laws and guidance where amendments to the current legal framework are required (or recommended) so as to improve procedures at the border crossing points. Furthermore, the various agencies responsible for border security should be encouraged to develop and issue standard operating procedures, taking into consideration a common philosophy of integrated border management.

69. The Government of Lebanon should consider the expansion of the Northern Border Pilot Project to include responsibility for the border crossing points. This would certainly increase the possibility of an exchange of information (intelligence) among the agencies involved and help to maximize coordination and cooperation among them. The long-term goal should be to create one single entity, separate from the four agencies currently tasked with certain aspects of border security, or as a part of one of the agencies, adequately staffed and budgeted.

70. Additional equipment has been received at all border crossing points, mainly information technology equipment, from the donor countries, but it is not yet fully functional. Related training has been provided. The effective and efficient use of equipment, particularly information technology equipment, should be a priority.

71. Greater priority should be directed to those crossing points along the eastern border. The Team was informed that the lack of action along the eastern border was due to a pending decision by the Government of Lebanon on whether to extend the Common Border Force to incorporate the eastern border. Priority has been given to the Northern Border Pilot Project and the Masnaa border crossing point. Given that the Pilot Project and the mandate of the Common Border Force excludes border crossing points, finalization of the project and waiting for an evaluation should not serve as an excuse for not implementing some of the recommendations of Team I. Many of them could and should have been at least attempted or commenced under existing conditions and with minimal cost.

72. As stated in the report of Team I, the incomplete delineation of Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic still hampers border control and demotivates border security agencies when they have to intervene in areas that are not clearly marked. Therefore, it is necessary for this issue to be addressed vigorously.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

73. Taking into consideration that some of the recommendations put forward in the first report relied on political obstacles to be addressed prior to their implementation, and given the political climate in Lebanon during the past year, it is understandable that not all recommendations have been implemented.

74. However, the first report did include a number of recommendations that could have been implemented by the Lebanese authorities without significant, or any, financial or political implications and without changes in the organizational structure of the border management agencies.

75. The Team observed that a number of the recommendations in the first report have been incorporated and implemented through the establishment of the Common Border Force in the framework of the Northern Border Pilot Project. Although those recommendations have not always been exploited to their full potential, this does represent a significant step forward. Unfortunately, this is not the case concerning most of the border crossing points and along the eastern Green Border.

76. At the airport and seaports some minor progress could be observed, but there still remains considerable room for improvement.

77. In conclusion, there has been some progress on the northern border through the Common Border Force and some minor improvements at other locations. In general, however, Lebanon has not yet succeeded in enhancing the overall security of its borders in any significant manner.

78. The Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II, therefore, reiterates the full set of recommendations contained in the report of Team I, as they are just as valid now as they were one year ago. Although some of the recommendations have been implemented in part or in modified form they should, where possible, be implemented as soon as possible. The recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team I include the following:

- A multi-agency mobile force focusing on arms smuggling should be established with the purpose of ensuring efficient arms seizures through its intelligence and rapid interception capabilities.
- An intelligence and analysis component should be established within the multi-agency force with the purpose of gaining access to all relevant intelligence from the four agencies, analysing it and providing the four agencies and the multi-agency force with profitable targets identified.
- International border security experts should be deployed to the multi-agency force and its embedded intelligence and analysis cell; to all four agencies on all levels to advise on non-military border security aspects and related training; and to an advisory secretariat consisting of both international advisers and representatives from the Lebanese border security agencies.
- A dedicated border guard agency should be established as part of a long-term strategy to streamline border security procedures and gather all expertise, information and intelligence in one agency.
- Full and absolute control should be established over border crossing points by creating standard operating procedures, including regulations for any

movement inside the control area of persons, vehicles and goods, standardized compulsory measures for checking compliance and anti-corruption mechanisms; and by modifying the infrastructures, where appropriate.

- Measures should be instituted to separate legal and illegal near-border or border-crossing activities so as to create a transparent and unambiguous environment, such as restricting movements in some areas, marking the border line, establishing additional local border crossing points, relocating crossings to the border and providing socio-economic programmes as an alternative to families' reliance on smuggling.

- Training programmes should be established for the four agencies at all levels to transform the border security concept and doctrines into a highly professional and skilled civilian approach, where possible building on or drawing from the training experience of the Northern Border Pilot Project and implementing practical aspects of the internationally agreed border management concept relating to cooperation and coordination, intelligence gathering, technical skills and risk analysis.

- The provision of border-specific equipment to all agencies should be enhanced for the purpose of increasing efficiency and serving as a force multiplier, including air and land surveillance equipment, communications equipment, vehicles, scanners, other inspection devices and all required computer hardware and software.

- Cooperation with Syrian counterparts should be established, in particular at the operational level, making border security management a joint effort to secure the border and prevent illegal cross-border activities.

79. In order to ensure that the process of reaching an efficient and effective Lebanese border control system will increase and maintain momentum, the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II makes the following supplementary recommendation: a strategic plan should be developed. This plan should clarify the end state that the Government of Lebanon wishes to achieve with regard to its border control system and the ways and means of achieving this, including a description of the phases and stations along the way, and develop a process of self-assessment by the relevant Lebanese authorities in view of the strategically defined level of proficiency and effectiveness required. This should take into consideration the concept of integrated border management and the recommendations put forward in the report of Team I.

80. It is further recommended that donor countries actively ensure that cooperation and the coordination of their activities in accordance with the Lebanese requirements is enhanced to achieve the optimum output from their efforts, either by cultivating the existing mechanism or adopting a new one.

Annex I

Visits and meetings of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team

Thursday, 17 July 2008

Briefing, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon

Ambassador Patrick Laurent, European Union

Friday, 18 July 2008

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora

General Masri, Acting Commander, Lebanese Armed Forces

General Georges Khoury, Director of Military Intelligence, Lebanese Armed Forces

General Carl Ulrich Stoltz, Head, German Project Office

Saturday, 19 July 2008

General Siham Harakeh, Director of Operations, General Security

Monday, 21 July 2008

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon briefing

Marta Ruedas, United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident Coordinator

General Rifi, Director General, Internal Security Forces

Border Security Committee

Colonel Iskandar and Project Implementation Unit

Tuesday, 22 July 2008

Donor border sub-group

General Assaad Ghanem, Director General, General Customs

Hansjörg Haber, German Ambassador

Jan Christensen, Danish Ambassador

Wednesday, 23 July 2008

General Farid Khoury, Commander, Common Border Force

General Hamid Darwish, Commander, northern region

Common Operations Centre of the Common Border Force

Senior border security officials at the Tripoli seaport

Training facilities of the Common Border Force

Arida border crossing point

Thursday, 24 July 2008

Aboudieh border crossing point

Bokayaa border crossing point

Sahlet Al Bokayaa in Wadi Khaled (location I)

Kaa border crossing point

Al Qasr (location II), Haouch Beit Ismail (location III) and Ard el-Qamar (location IV) border crossing points

Friday, 25 July 2008

Colonel Ibrahim Kenaan, Commander of the Military Zone, Beka'a

Masnaa border crossing point

Deir El-aachayer town (location V) and the Palestinian position at Haloua (location VI)

Monday, 28 July 2008

Assessment from the air to the northern and eastern border (to Rayak airbase)

Tuesday, 29 July 2008

Commissaire Marc Pasotti and Janaina Herrera, French Embassy

Elias Murr, Minister of Defence

Beirut seaport

Hassan Kraytem, Head, Port Security, and others

General Choukeir, Head, Beirut Airport Security

Hariri International Airport

Wednesday, 30 July 2008

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora

Benjamin Saoul, Deputy Head, Near East Group, and Jeremy Chivers, Stabilization and Recovery Adviser, British Embassy

Border Security Committee

Debriefing, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator

Annex II

Map of border crossing points and field visits

Annex III

Terms of reference of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team II

Introduction

1. In paragraph 14 of its resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council called upon the Government of Lebanon to secure its borders and all entry points to prevent the entry into Lebanon without its consent of arms or related materiel. In paragraph 15 of the resolution the Council outlined measures that States should take to prevent the supply of arms or other military assistance to any entity or individual other than those authorized by the Government of Lebanon or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

2. In his report of 14 March 2007 (S/2007/147), the Secretary-General suggested that the Council consider further steps to ensure the full implementation of paragraph 15 of resolution 1701 (2006), such as supporting an independent assessment mission to monitor Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic. In its presidential statement of 17 April 2007, the Council welcomed the Secretary-General's intention in this regard and invited him to dispatch at the earliest, in close liaison with the Government of Lebanon, an independent mission to fully assess the monitoring of the border and to report back to the Council on the findings and recommendations of the mission in this regard.

3. Accordingly, the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team, composed of five experts with relevant experience in police, border management and arms trafficking, was established. The Team was dispatched to Lebanon from 27 May to 15 June 2007 with a mandate to fully assess border security arrangements and the monitoring of the "Green Border", including the official crossing points, in close liaison with the relevant Lebanese security authorities and the German team leading the pilot project in northern Lebanon, and to make specific recommendations to the Secretary-General on measures and assistance strategies leading to the enhancement of border security along the entire length of Lebanon's border with the Syrian Arab Republic. The findings and recommendations of the Team were submitted for the attention of the Secretary-General and annexed to his letter to the Council of 26 June 2007 (S/2007/382).

4. In his report of 28 June 2007 (S/2007/392), the Secretary-General noted that the report of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team was crucial and provided a professional and detailed technical evaluation of the difficult situation along the entire Lebanese-Syrian border. The Secretary-General recommended that the Government of Lebanon implement the findings of the report in full. In its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/29), the Security Council welcomed the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team and looked forward to their implementation. It requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Government of Lebanon, to assess their implementation and to regularly update the Council on this issue in his regular reports on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), including as appropriate and in coordination with the Government of Lebanon, on the basis of follow-up field visits.

5. The Secretary-General provided a first assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team in his report of 30 October 2007 (S/2007/641). He recommended that the Government of Lebanon complete its implementation of the recommendations of the Team by taking further concrete steps towards an effective and integrated border-control system along all its borders. He reiterated the readiness of the United Nations to continue working closely with the Government of Lebanon, including through the deployment of further technical missions to Lebanon, as required.

6. In his report of 28 February 2008 (S/2008/135) to the Council, the Secretary-General highlighted both the progress achieved by the Government of Lebanon in developing its border management capacity and securing its borders as well as the remaining challenges in this regard, and stated that key recommendations of the Team which are essential to enhancing security along Lebanon's borders remain to be implemented. In this regard, in accordance with the request of the Security Council in its presidential statement of 3 August 2007 (S/PRST/2007/29), and with a view to thoroughly assessing the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team and updating the Council, the Secretary-General stated his intention to dispatch a team to Lebanon to carry out an assessment, in coordination with the Government of Lebanon.

Mandate

7. The team of experts will work in close liaison with all the relevant Lebanese authorities, including the Border Security Committee, the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces, General Security, General Customs and international donors providing technical assistance and training to Lebanon, including through the German-led pilot project in northern Lebanon.

8. The team of experts will thoroughly assess the implementation of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team. The team of experts will evaluate progress achieved to date and will make recommendations to the Secretary-General on measures to further enhance Lebanon's border security.

9. To this end, the team of experts will:

- Undertake a detailed evaluation of the implementation to date by the Government of Lebanon of the recommendations of the Lebanon Independent Border Assessment Team.
- Assess the full impact of those measures on the ground in terms of Lebanon's border security arrangements along the "Green Border" and all official crossing points.
- Draw on the findings of other relevant completed or ongoing evaluations and, in this regard, review ongoing efforts to support the increased cooperation and integration of the work of the relevant Lebanese agencies responsible for border security.
- Where applicable, indicate resource and training priorities, capacity-building and infrastructural requirements.
- Consult with international donors on the strategic framework for the development for the provision of international assistance to Lebanon's border management capacity and review institutional mechanisms to achieve this.

Main activities

The main activities recommended for the team of experts include:

- To meet with the relevant Lebanese security agencies, United Nations bodies, bilateral partners and other parties to enquire and discuss, and develop the appropriate evaluation and recommendations accordingly.
- To visit and inspect the necessary points along the "Green Border", all official crossing points, and the project site of the German-led pilot project in northern Lebanon.
- To consult closely with the relevant Lebanese authorities and security agencies and all international donors providing support to the development of Lebanon's border management capacity, in the process of evaluating Lebanon's border security arrangements and making recommendations accordingly.

11. In this regard, it is proposed that the team of experts liaise closely with the Government of Lebanon and for this purpose endeavour to meet and liaise with the following interlocutors:

- The Prime Minster, the Ministers of Defence and the Interior and other relevant Government officials
- The Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces
- The heads of the Internal Security Forces, General Security and Military Intelligence
- Lebanese Chiefs of Police and other border services (Customs and Immigration).

Qualifications and appointment

12. Appointed by the Secretary-General, the team should be small and comprise senior border security, police/Customs and possibly military experts who will be employed by the United Nations on a full-time basis for a period of one month. The experts could be seconded for this task from Member States that have personnel with the relevant experience and expertise. Assistance could also be provided by United Nations personnel (current or former) as deemed appropriate.

13. All members of the team shall have the status of experts on mission for the United Nations. They shall benefit from the privileges and immunities provided for in articles VI and VII of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations during the period of their mission. They shall be subject to the Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials, and Experts on Mission, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/280 of 27 March 2002.

Logistics and support

14. The Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat will be the "lead" Department in support of the team and will continue to work in close consultation with relevant United Nations departments, offices and agencies, particularly the

Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

15. Lebanese authorities, relevant United Nations agencies and missions in Lebanon and elsewhere in the region will support the team in Lebanon with all required logistical and security-related assistance and facilitate all transportation and travel as necessary.

Cooperation with the Government of Lebanon

16. The Government of Lebanon shall ensure the freedom of movement of the members of the team and of its secretariat throughout Lebanon. The Government of Lebanon shall ensure the security of the members of the team and their secretariat while deployed in Lebanon. The team shall enjoy the full cooperation of the Government of Lebanon, in particular of the Government agencies mentioned in the terms of reference. It should be accompanied by the competent Lebanese authorities during field visits.

17. The Government of Lebanon shall accord (a) to the members of the team the privileges and immunities, facilities and exemptions enjoyed by experts on mission for the United Nations, as provided for in articles VI and VII of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, to which Lebanon is a party, and (b) to the secretariat of the team the privileges and immunities, facilities and exemptions enjoyed by officials of the United Nations, as provided for in articles V and VII of that Convention.

Reporting

18. A detailed report on the team's findings, of no more than 8,500 words unless exception is requested and authorized by the Department of Political Affairs, shall be submitted for the attention of the Secretary-General not later than two weeks after the completion of the field visit.

Funding

19. Subject to the Secretary-General's approval, the team shall be funded from the Secretary-General's unforeseen and extraordinary budget account.